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GENERAL AND COMPLETE DISARMAMENT: SMALL ARMS

Note by the Secretary-General

By its resolution 50/70 B of 12 December 1995 the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to prepare a report on small arms, with the assistance of a panel of governmental experts.

Pursuant to that resolution, the Secretary-General has the honour to submit to the Assembly the report of the Panel of Governmental Experts on Small Arms.

* A/52/150 and Corr.1.

ANNEX

Report of the Panel of Governmental Experts on Small Arms

FOREWORD BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

Readily available and easy to use, small arms and light weapons have been the primary or sole tools of violence in almost every recent conflict dealt with by the United Nations. In the hands of irregular troops operating with scant respect for international and humanitarian law, these weapons have taken a heavy toll of human lives, with women and children accounting for nearly 80 per cent of the casualties. Thus, the mandate given by the General Assembly in its resolution 50/70 B to report on the phenomenon of small arms was especially timely, drawing much-needed attention to what has become a priority concern in efforts to rid the world of the scourge of war and the burden of armaments.

While not by themselves causing the conflicts in which they are used, the proliferation of small arms and light weapons affects the intensity and duration of violence and encourages militancy rather than a peaceful resolution of unsettled differences. Perhaps most grievously, we see a vicious circle in which insecurity leads to a higher demand for weapons, which itself breed still greater insecurity, and so on.

Some of the most protracted armed conflicts in the world at present are those in which a recurring cycle of violence, an erosion of political legitimacy and a loss of economic viability deprive a State of its authority to cope with either the causes or the consequences of an excessive accumulation, proliferation and use of small arms. Effective measures against small arms would address both ends of that spectrum.

Towards that end, the Panel of Governmental Experts has prepared a pragmatic and results-oriented report, for which I am very grateful. The members of the Panel, deeply committed to the task entrusted to them, devoted more than their expertise: they financed their own field work which they viewed as essential for gaining a better understanding of several affected countries and subregions. The specific concerns of the subregions visited and the appeals contained in the appendices to the Panel's report merit prompt consideration.

In its report, the Panel recommends a set of practical measures to reduce the weapons already in circulation and to prevent future accumulations. The unanimity with which the Panel made those proposals deserves equally strong endorsement by the General Assembly.

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL DATED 7 AUGUST 1997 FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PANEL OF GOVERNMENTAL EXPERTS ON SMALL ARMS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to submit herewith the report of the Panel of Governmental Experts on Small Arms. The Panel was appointed by you in pursuance of paragraph 1 of General Assembly resolution 50/70 B of 12 December 1995.

In April 1996 you appointed, on the basis of equitable geographical representation, the following governmental experts:

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Bamako, Mali

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The report was prepared between 24 June 1996 and 18 July 1997. During that period, the Panel held three sessions in New York: the first from 24 to 28 June 1996, the second from 21 to 31 January 1997 and the third from 7 to 18 July 1997. The Panel also met at Tokyo, from 26 to 28 May 1997, at the invitation of the Government of Japan.

The Panel wishes to express its appreciation for the excellent support which it received from members of the Secretariat. It expresses its thanks to the Director of the Centre for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Prvoslav Davinic. Its

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special appreciation goes to Mrs. Swadesh Rana who served as the Secretary of the Panel, and to the consultant, Dr. Ed Laurance.

I have been requested by the Panel of Governmental Experts, as its Chairman, to submit to you, on its behalf, the present report, which was adopted unanimously.

(Signed) Mitsuro Donowaki
Chairman of the Panel of Governmental
Experts on Small Arms

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The General Assembly, in paragraph 1 of resolution 50/70 B of 12 December 1995, entitled "Small arms", requested the Secretary-General to prepare, with the assistance of a group of qualified governmental experts, a report on:

(a) The types of small arms and light weapons actually being used in conflicts being dealt with by the United Nations;

(b) The nature and causes of the excessive and destabilizing accumulation and transfer of small arms and light weapons, including their illicit production and trade;

(c) The ways and means to prevent and reduce the excessive and destabilizing accumulation and transfer of small arms and light weapons, in particular as they cause or exacerbate conflict.

2. In paragraph 2 of the resolution, the Secretary-General was requested to seek the views and proposals of Member States, to collect all other relevant information and make them available for consideration by the panel of governmental experts. The Assembly also requested the Secretary-General, in the preparation of the report, to pay particular attention to the role of the United Nations in this field and to the complementary role of regional organizations.

3. In April 1996, the Secretary-General appointed, on the basis of equitable geographical representation, a panel of governmental experts from 16 countries: Belarus, Belgium, Canada, Colombia, Egypt, El Salvador, Finland, Germany, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Malaysia, Mali, the Russian Federation, South Africa, Sri Lanka and the United States of America.

4. The Panel held three sessions in New York, from 24 to 28 June 1996, from 20 to 31 January 1997 and from 7 to 18 July 1997. The Panel also met at Tokyo from 26 to 28 May 1997, at the invitation of the Government of Japan.¹

5. The Panel took account of the replies received from Member States in response to Assembly resolution 50/70 B.² It reviewed the conclusions and findings of other United Nations bodies and groups concerned with issues related to small arms, within their areas of jurisdiction.³ It assessed the relevant information collected by the Secretariat from the research community. It heard presentations by scholars and other invitees on the subjects covered by paragraph 1 of Assembly resolution 50/70 B.⁴

6. The mandate entrusted to the Panel was carried out without prejudice to the positions taken by Member States on, or the importance allocated by them to, the priorities accorded to nuclear disarmament, weapons of mass destruction and conventional disarmament. Anti-personnel landmines constitute a category of small arms and light weapons. The issue is, however, being addressed in other forums. The Panel, therefore, agreed to avoid duplication of effort and different approaches by excluding anti-personnel landmines from its deliberations.

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7. In accordance with paragraph 1 (c) of Assembly resolution 50/70 B, the Panel concentrated its attention on the actual role of small arms and light weapons in exacerbating armed conflicts being dealt with by the United Nations.

8. The Panel decided to focus its attention on small arms and light weapons manufactured to military specifications, in view of the work currently being undertaken by the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice on firearm regulation for the purpose of crime prevention and public health and safety. Duplication of United Nations efforts should be avoided as much as possible. The Chairman of the Commission's Expert Group on Firearm Regulation, Mr. James Hayes, briefed the Panel on the work of the Commission on 8 July 1997. The Panel endorses the draft resolution recommended by the Commission for adoption by the Economic and Social Council, entitled "Firearm regulation for the purpose of crime prevention and public health and safety".⁵

9. To gain a better insight and clearer understanding of the problems created by the accumulation, proliferation and use of small arms in various regions, the Panel agreed to undertake inter-sessional work. As a result, the Panel organized three regional workshops to discuss the characteristics unique to each region and areas of common concern. The information collected at the workshops provided a major input to the preparation of the present report.

10. The first regional workshop was held at Pretoria, from 23 to 25 September 1996. It was financed from a voluntary contribution made by the Government of Japan. Logistical and administrative support was provided by the Department of Foreign Affairs of South Africa. Persons invited to participate in the workshop included those from the International Commission of Inquiry (Rwanda) and the Advisory Mission on the Proliferation of Light Weapons in the Saharo-Sahelian subregion. Also invited were government officials and individual experts from Sierra Leone, Somalia, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland and Zimbabwe. In addition, 7 of the 16 members of the Panel participated in the workshop (the experts from Belgium, Finland, Germany, Japan, Mali, South Africa and the United States of America). The joint appeal on small arms, issued at Pretoria on 25 September, appears in appendix I.

11. The second regional workshop was held at San Salvador on 16 and 17 January 1997. The workshop was financed from voluntary contributions made by the Governments of Belgium, Canada, Finland, Germany, Japan and the United States of America. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of El Salvador provided administrative and logistical support. Participants in the workshop included officials from the United Nations Support Unit in El Salvador, the Organization of American States and the Caribbean Association of Commissioners of Police. Also invited were government officials and individual experts from Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Panama and the United States of America. In addition, eight members of the Panel participated (the experts from Belgium, Canada, Colombia, El Salvador, Finland, Japan, Malaysia, and the United States of America). The statement on small arms, issued at San Salvador on 17 January, appears in appendix II.

12. The third regional workshop was held at Kathmandu on 22 and 23 May 1997. With South-West Asia as its focus, the workshop was financed from a voluntary contribution made by the Government of Japan. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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of Nepal provided administrative and logistical support. Invitees from Bangladesh, India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Nepal, Pakistan, the Russian Federation and Sri Lanka participated. In addition, nine members of the Panel participated (the experts from Belgium, Canada, Colombia, Egypt, Finland, Germany, Malaysia, Sri Lanka and the United States of America). A call upon Afghanistan was made jointly by all the invitees from the subregion and appears in appendix III.

II. OVERVIEW

13. In the position paper of the Secretary-General entitled "Supplement to An Agenda for Peace" (A/50/60-S/1995/1), it is noted that while there are some agreed global norms and standards against weapons of mass destruction, there are no such norms or standards that can be used in reducing the excessive and destabilizing accumulation of small arms and light weapons. These are the weapons increasingly used as primary instruments of violence in the internal conflicts dealt with by the United Nations, they are responsible for large numbers of deaths and the displacement of citizens around the world, and they consume large amounts of United Nations resources.

14. The excessive and destabilizing accumulation and transfer of small arms and light weapons is closely related to the increased incidence of internal conflicts and high levels of crime and violence. It is, therefore, an issue of legitimate concern for the international community. Groups and individuals operating outside the reach of State and government forces make extensive use of such weapons in internal conflicts. Insurgent forces, irregular troops, criminal gangs and terrorist groups are using all types of small arms and light weapons. The illicit trafficking in such weapons by drug cartels, criminals and traders in contraband goods has also been on the increase.

15. Small arms and light weapons have been or are the primary or sole tools of violence in several of the armed conflicts dealt with by the United Nations, particularly where fighting involves irregular troops among the conflicting parties. Many of these conflicts have inflicted heavy casualties on the people involved. The vast majority of the casualties have been civilians, mostly women and children. It was estimated that, by 1996, over 35 million people in 23 countries throughout the world were at risk of facing civil strife either owing to ongoing humanitarian crises or as a result of a slow recovery from past ones.⁶

16. Irrespective of their duration or level of violence, many such conflicts were or are being fought in populated areas, without concern for established norms of international law. In contrast to disciplined regular armed forces, irregular forces tend to make no distinction between a combatant and non-combatant. Irregular forces are equipped with whatever type of weapon they can acquire. Less expensive than major conventional weapons, ready to use without extensive prior training, particularly against civilians, and fit for transport on a person, pack animal or light vehicle, small arms and light weapons are often the weapons of choice in such situations.

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17. Accumulations of small arms and light weapons by themselves do not cause the conflicts in which they are used. The availability of these weapons, however, contributes towards exacerbating conflicts by increasing the lethality and duration of violence, by encouraging a violent rather than a peaceful resolution of differences, and by generating a vicious circle of a greater sense of insecurity, which in turn leads to a greater demand for, and use of, such weapons.

18. A particularly disturbing feature of current conflicts is the participation of children. By 1988, as many as 200,000 children under the age of 16 were estimated to have participated in conflicts in 25 countries.⁷ Since then, the situation may even have worsened. In the case of protracted conflicts, entire generations of children have been affected.

19. Among the worst affected victims of recent conflicts fought primarily with small arms and light weapons are the inhabitants of some of the poorest countries in the world. Particularly vulnerable are multi-ethnic societies with a history of tension among groups. Also at risk are countries emerging from long wars of national liberation and confronted with the task of reintegrating former combatants into civil society. In many instances, weapons procured at an earlier stage for purposes of national liberation have become available for the violent overthrow of new Governments by insurgent forces or terrorists, or for acts of criminality for personal gain.

20. In one way or another, virtually every part of the United Nations system is dealing with the direct and indirect consequences of recent armed conflicts fought mostly with small arms and light weapons. Some of the most intractable armed conflicts being dealt with by the United Nations are those in which a recurring cycle of violence, an erosion of political legitimacy and a loss of economic viability have deprived a State of its authority to cope either with the causes or the consequences of the excessive accumulation, proliferation and use of small arms and light weapons.

21. The full extent of the destabilizing consequences of an excessive accumulation, proliferation, transfer and use of small arms and light weapons is only beginning to be assessed. In the process of negotiating and implementing peace accords to end armed conflicts, the United Nations has learned valuable lessons about the high priority that must be given to weapons-related issues. Among them are experiences with the imposition by Member States of United Nations embargoes in conflict situations; the retrieval, collection and disposal of weapons; the reintegration into society of former combatants; and the training of personnel for the maintenance of law and order. An encouraging lesson drawn from the recent United Nations experience is the willingness of local communities in some States to volunteer in uncovering, collecting and destroying small arms that are unaccounted for.

22. Given the serious consequences of the problem as described above, this is a promising time to analyse the small arms and light weapons in use in recent conflicts, the nature and causes of their accumulation and transfer, as well as to recommend to Member States, regional organizations and the international community as a whole, particularly as represented by the United Nations, practical measures to prevent and reduce the excessive and destabilizing

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accumulation and transfer of such weapons, with a view to diminishing their role in exacerbating conflicts.

III. WEAPONS IN USE

23. The mandate assigned by the General Assembly to the Panel was to consider the types of small arms and light weapons actually being used in conflicts being dealt with by the United Nations. It is important to consider the unique characteristics of small arms and light weapons in developing the ways and means to solve the problems caused by their excessive accumulation.

24. Small arms and light weapons range from clubs, knives and machetes to those weapons just below those covered by the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, for example, mortars below the calibre of 100 mm. The small arms and light weapons which are of main concern for the purposes of the present report are those which are manufactured to military specifications for use as lethal instruments of war.

25. Small arms and light weapons are used by all armed forces, including internal security forces, for, inter alia, self-protection or self-defence, close or short-range combat, direct or indirect fire, and against tanks or aircraft at relatively short distances. Broadly speaking, small arms are those weapons designed for personal use, and light weapons are those designed for use by several persons serving as a crew.

26. Based on this broad definition and on an assessment of weapons actually used in conflicts being dealt with by the United Nations, the weapons addressed in the present report are categorized as follows:

- (a) Small arms:
 - (i) Revolvers and self-loading pistols;
 - (ii) Rifles and carbines;
 - (iii) Sub-machine-guns;
 - (iv) Assault rifles;
 - (v) Light machine-guns;
- (b) Light weapons:
 - (i) Heavy machine-guns;
 - (ii) Hand-held under-barrel and mounted grenade launchers;

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- (iii) Portable anti-aircraft guns;**
- (iv) Portable anti-tank guns, recoilless rifles;**
- (v) Portable launchers of anti-tank missile and rocket systems;**
- (vi) Portable launchers of anti-aircraft missile systems;
- (vii) Mortars of calibres of less than 100 mm;
- (c) Ammunition and explosives:
 - (i) Cartridges (rounds) for small arms;
 - (ii) Shells and missiles for light weapons;
 - (iii) Mobile containers with missiles or shells for single-action anti-aircraft and anti-tank systems;
 - (iv) Anti-personnel and anti-tank hand grenades;
 - (v) Landmines;
 - (vi) Explosives.

27. While small arms and light weapons are designed for use by armed forces, they have unique characteristics that are also of particular advantage for irregular warfare or terrorist and criminal action:

(a) Since weapons in this class are capable of being carried, if a small arm, by one person or, if a light arm, by two or more people, a pack animal or a light vehicle, they allow for mobile operations where heavy mechanized and air forces are not available or are restricted in their capabilities owing to difficult mountain, jungle or urban terrain;

(b) Under these conditions, mortars or mounted anti-aircraft guns sometimes constitute the main armament of light forces, providing them with high firepower that often causes heavy casualties among the civilian population if used indiscriminately;

(c) Light anti-aircraft and anti-tank missile systems not only provide the capability to sustain operations in favourable terrain against forces supported by tanks and aircraft but can also be used by terrorists against civil air traffic with devastating effects;

(d) Since many small arms require a minimum of maintenance and logistics they are suited for protracted operations;

** These weapons are sometimes mounted.

(e) Since they can easily be concealed they are suited to covert actions and transfer;

(f) Since they are less complex and, therefore, normally of lower cost than major conventional weapons, especially if they are used or surplus, they are affordable by actors other than the State.

28. In conflicts dealt with by the United Nations, non-military weapons, that is, those weapons not manufactured to military specifications, such as hunting firearms and home-made weapons, have been used in violent conflicts, terrorism, and the intentional harming of civilian populations. In such cases, and where such weapons are used and accumulated in numbers that endanger the security and political stability of a State, the Panel considered them relevant for the purposes of the present report.⁵

29. Ammunition and explosives form an integral part of the small arms and light weapons used in conflicts. The availability of ammunition is an important independent element, since weapons can be rendered useless without appropriate ammunition. The mass production of modern reliable and effective ammunition requires highly developed and precise industrial tools. It is assumed that all countries producing small arms (more than 70) and light weapons are also capable of manufacturing the relevant ammunition. In addition, in many regions there is a widespread private production of less reliable ammunition by small enterprises and individuals.

30. Moreover, violence perpetrated through improvised explosive devices has recently exacerbated conflicts and caused severe destruction and death. Even a small quantity of such explosive devices has been used to devastating effect by terrorists and insurgents in various parts of the world. In this context, it has been observed that the unimpeded supply and availability of ammunition and explosives, especially by means of illicit trafficking, compound the effects of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. Therefore, ammunition and explosives themselves are a cause for concern in conflicts affected by small arms and light weapons.

31. The indiscriminate use of anti-personnel landmines has created a significant global problem well within the mandate of the Panel. Since the international community is, however, addressing this issue in other forums, the Panel agreed to avoid duplication of effort and different approaches by not including anti-personnel landmines in its deliberations.

32. In contrast to anti-personnel landmines, small arms are constructed for and capable of precise direct fire without inherent indiscriminate effects. High civilian casualties in recent conflicts are the result of indiscriminate warfare that deliberately targets the civilian population with whichever weapons are available.

33. New technologies are constantly being developed and applied to small arms and light weapons. Attention needs to be paid to the potential impact of these new developments with respect to their proliferation, accumulation and potential for negative effects in those conflicts dealt with by the United Nations. Particular attention should be given to modern light-missile launchers, together

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with precision-guided munitions, such as the shoulder-fired surface-to-air missiles that can be used for terrorist attacks against sensitive targets, with devastating effects.

IV. NATURE AND CAUSES OF EXCESSIVE AND DESTABILIZING ACCUMULATIONS OF SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS

A. Nature

34. While there is a growing recognition of problems associated with the proliferation, accumulation and use of small arms and light weapons, there are no globally agreed norms and standards to determine the excessive and destabilizing levels of this class of weapon.

35. A majority of the small arms and light weapons being used in conflicts dealt with by the United Nations are not newly produced. Those weapons which are newly produced come from many different countries, as illustrated in the data below on the production of assault rifles for the years 1945-1990:⁹

Name of assault rifle	Number of countries using the weapon	Number of countries manufacturing the weapon	Number of weapons manufactured (millions)
FN FAL family	94	15	5-7
AK family	78	14 +	35-50
M-16 family	67	7	8
H&K G3 family	64 +	18	7

36. The terms "excessive" and "destabilizing" are relative and exist only in the context of specific regions, subregions or States. The mere accumulation of weapons is not a sufficient criterion by which to define an accumulation of weapons as excessive or destabilizing, since large numbers of weapons that are under the strict and effective control of a responsible State do not necessarily lead to violence. Conversely, a small number of weapons can be destabilizing under certain conditions.

37. Accumulations of small arms and light weapons become excessive and destabilizing:

(a) When a State, whether a supplier or recipient, does not exercise restraint in the production, transfer and acquisition of such weapons beyond those needed for legitimate national and collective defence and internal security;

(b) When a State, whether a supplier or recipient, cannot exercise effective control to prevent the illegitimate acquisition, transfer, transit or circulation of such weapons;

(c) When the use of such weapons manifests itself in armed conflict, in crime, such as arms and drug trafficking, or other actions contrary to the norms of national or international law.

B. Causes

38. Accumulations of small arms and light weapons by themselves do not cause the conflicts in which they are used. They can, however, exacerbate and increase their lethality. These conflicts have underlying causes which arise from a number of accumulated and complex political, commercial, socio-economic, ethnic, cultural and ideological factors. Such conflicts will not be finally resolved without addressing the root causes.

39. There is no single cause for these accumulations and their subsequent transformation into instability and conflict. The variety of different causes is usefully categorized by demand and supply factors, although the distinction between both factors is not always clear-cut and there are grey areas in between. Accumulations are always a combination of both factors but the predominance of either demand or supply varies by subregion and State, as well as by time period.

40. At the global level, internal conflicts have served to attract large numbers of small arms and light weapons. In this context, one factor bearing on the availability, circulation and accumulation of these weapons in many areas of conflict is their earlier supply by cold war opponents. Foreign interference in areas of tension, or conflict by States which pursue strategic or specific regional interests, is still a feature of current realities. Also, alien domination or foreign occupation and violation of the right to self-determination of all peoples in contravention of the Charter of the United Nations, as well as other political and socio-economic inequities, have given rise to conflict.¹⁰

41. Insurgency and terrorism remain as factors in the destabilizing use of small arms, light weapons or explosives. Other factors are drug trafficking and criminality. The link between terrorism and such weapons has been referred to by several international forums.

42. When the State loses control over its security functions and fails to maintain the security of its citizens, the subsequent growth of armed violence, banditry and organized crime increases the demand for weapons by citizens seeking to protect themselves and their property.

43. The incomplete reintegration of former combatants into society after a conflict has ended, in combination with the inability of States to provide governance and security, may lead to their participation in crime and armed violence.

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44. In some States and subregions there is a culture of weapons whereby the possession of military-style weapons is a status symbol, a source of personal security, a means of subsistence, a sign of manliness and, in some cases, a symbol of ethnic and cultural identity. By itself, such a culture does not necessarily lead to a culture of violence in which the possession of these weapons connotes political power and a preference for the resolution of conflict by the use of arms. The transformation of a culture of weapons to a culture of violence, resulting in the increasing demand for weapons, most often occurs when a State cannot guarantee security to its citizens or control the illicit activities in which these weapons are utilized. The task of controlling or lowering the level of use of these weapons is made more difficult in a culture of weapons.

45. States have the right to export and import small arms and light weapons. The misuse of that right and the relatively recent awareness of the problems caused by the accumulation of small arms and light weapons have resulted in insufficient recognition being accorded to the need to better control the transfer of such weapons.

46. During the cold war, the increase in licensed production and transfer of technology led to a proliferation of legitimate producers of small arms and light weapons, mainly medium-sized and small enterprises, in an effort by States to become more independent in the production of weapons considered necessary to their security. This led to the search for export markets in order to dispose of surplus weapons. New production of small arms and light weapons has, however, declined owing to a reduction in national defence budgets.

47. Another factor to be considered is the large surplus of small arms and light weapons created by the reduction in armed forces in the post-cold-war period. While a significant portion of these weapons has been destroyed, an unknown number of them has found its way to internal armed conflicts from States that have ceased to exist or lost political control.

48. The problem of the accumulation of weapons is exacerbated by the fact that, during some conflicts, large quantities of weapons were distributed to citizens by Governments, in addition to being obtained from other sources, including illicit transfers. In several instances, self-defence units were formed by Governments and gun possession laws were liberalized. When the conflicts ended, the weapons remained in the hands of citizens and were available for recirculation within the society, in the region and even outside the region.

49. Several United Nations peacekeeping or post-conflict peace-building operations have resulted in the incomplete disarmament of former combatants owing to peace agreements or mandates which did not cover small arms and light weapons disarmament, or to shortfalls in the implementation of mandates because of inadequate operational guidance or resources. Thus, large numbers of surplus weapons became available in the conflict areas for criminal activities, recirculation and illicit trafficking.

C. Modes of transfer

50. Much of the supply and acquisition of small arms and light weapons is legitimate trade which occurs among Governments or among legal entities authorized by Governments.

51. During the cold war and in the current period, States have secretly carried out transfers of small arms and light weapons. Such transfers are not necessarily illicit. Any transfer not approved by the competent authorities in the recipient State could, however, be classified by that State as interference in its internal affairs and therefore illegal.

52. The supply of weapons to regions of tension and conflict is characterized by a lack of transparency that is due to the characteristics of small arms and light weapons which can be easily concealed during transport.

53. Networks operating internationally and other modes of transfer used for the illicit transfer of a variety of commodities are also used to transfer weapons. The techniques used involve smuggling, concealment, mislabelling and false documentation. To hide financial transactions, use is made of coded bank accounts protected by the secrecy laws of some financial institutions. To transport weapons, various methods are used, such as ships with bogus registration and flags of convenience.

54. Illicit actors in this trade include certain groups in exile and private arms dealers, whose motives may include political support of groups within a country, or drug trafficking and other criminal activities conducted for profit.

55. Several insurgent and armed groups are known to procure weapons and obtain financial support with the assistance of allied groups and organizations based abroad which act as a front and which illicitly traffic in weapons, ammunition and explosives.

56. Criminal elements and groups engaged in armed internal conflict can also acquire small arms and light weapons by: an exchange between groups and among unauthorized persons; theft, robbery or loss of weapons in legal possession; and raids, ambushes and other hostile acts. Often, weapons resulting from legal transfers between Governments end up on the illegal market because of corrupt governmental officials.

D. Illicit trade in weapons

57. Illicit trafficking in weapons is understood to cover that international trade in conventional weapons, which is contrary to the laws of States and/or international law.¹¹

58. Illicit trafficking in such weapons plays a major role in the violence currently affecting some countries and regions, by supplying the instruments used to destabilize societies and Governments, encourage crime, and foster terrorism, drug trafficking, mercenary activities and the violation of human rights.

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59. In some cases the illicit supply of small arms and light weapons has occurred because there is no adequate national system of controls on arms production, exports and imports, and because border and customs personnel are poorly trained or corrupt.

60. The differences that exist between the legislation and enforcement mechanisms of States for the import and export of weapons, as well as the lack of cooperation in that area, facilitates the circulation and illicit transfer of small arms and light weapons. There is also no international convention or agreement that restricts such trade, or a body of rules by which a given transfer can be declared illegal under international law other than the arms embargoes adopted by the Security Council.

61. Accumulations of weapons by means of illicit trafficking are facilitated by a lack of coordination and cooperation among the States involved. In the case of both the recirculation and supply of weapons from outside the region or subregion, efforts to diminish the negative effects of such weapons are hampered by States that will not or cannot cooperate in such basic functions as sharing information regarding illicit trafficking in weapons and coordinating the cross-border seizure and collection of weapons.

E. Regional realities

62. Based on United Nations reports on its peace operations, commissions of inquiry and, most important, the three regional workshops conducted by the Panel, it became clear that there are effects and consequences unique to specific regions, subregions and States.

Africa

63. The African region is confronted with the challenges of both dealing with socio-economic reconstruction in post-conflict societies and containing various internal conflicts. The uncontrolled availability of small arms and light weapons is not only fuelling such conflicts but is also exacerbating violence and criminality. This undermines the State's ability to govern effectively, thereby threatening the stability and security necessary for socio-economic development. Porous borders, lack of resources and the absence of detailed and comprehensive data on the extent of this phenomenon are inhibiting the region's ability to effectively deal with the problem of proliferation.

64. Southern Africa is affected by the supply of small arms and light weapons left over from the conflicts in Mozambique and Angola, as well as licensed weapons being stolen or lost. There is a concern among the States in the region that the availability of these weapons is a major factor in exacerbating crime and armed violence, thereby threatening the consolidation of democracy and security which is needed for sustainable development. The weapons of most concern are, among others, handguns, assault rifles and home-made weapons.

65. Central Africa is dominated by recent internal and ethnic violence and violations of the Security Council arms embargo. The major factor impeding the development of ways and means of dealing with accumulations of weapons in this

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subregion is the collapse of the State's ability to govern and provide for its national security and the security of its citizens. This is compounded by the extreme levels of poverty in the subregion.

66. The weapons proliferating and available in West Africa are not newly produced but are left over from several civil wars of the recent past. This proliferation is enhanced by particularly long and unmanned borders. This destabilizing factor has forced some States in the Saharo-Sahelian subregion to ask for and receive United Nations assistance.

Central America

67. The Central American subregion has seen the end of three major domestic conflicts in the past seven years, where the United Nations played a critical role in their conclusion. As one of the major areas of confrontation during the cold war, this subregion was supplied with large numbers of small arms and light weapons which are still in circulation. They remain available for acquisition by criminal gangs and armed groups, despite the encouraging results from several programmes for the collection and destruction of arms.

68. Geographically, Central America is a major transit area for the illicit trafficking in drugs and weapons between North and South America, which produces destabilizing effects for the entire region.

69. The States in Central America have a particular challenge in demobilizing and reintegrating a large number of former combatants into useful and productive roles in society, since much of the crime and armed violence is perpetrated by ex-combatants with the weapons they retained after the conflicts were concluded. As a result of post-conflict peace-building processes, the subregion is marked by demilitarization and the development of democratic Governments which are increasingly able to build the basic institutions that can provide security for citizens of the State and its further economic and social development.

South Asia

70. The problem of excessive and destabilizing accumulations of small arms and light weapons in South Asia was significantly shaped by the war in Afghanistan from 1979 to 1988. During that conflict, both sides in the cold war exported large quantities of both major conventional weapons and small arms and light weapons into the region. Today, Afghanistan is a leading source of unaccounted weapons. The conflict continues and much of the current inflow of weapons is due to illicit deals involving a circuitous network of manufacturers, buyers, suppliers and distributors which are able to operate because of a lack of State authority. There is a lack of cooperation among several States in the region that also contributes to the problems of covert supply and poor controls over small arms and light weapons.

71. Insurgents and terrorist groups, as well as drug traffickers, in the region are also supplied with small arms and light weapons by illicit or covert networks. This region is particularly plagued by illicit trafficking in explosives, especially improvised explosive devices which have been frequently used in armed attacks. Most armed groups are based overseas and conduct fund-

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raising abroad for the illicit procurement of arms and for violent acts in the region.¹²

72. In this region, the production of and trafficking in drugs are directly linked to the proliferation and acquisition of small arms and light weapons. This problem, and illicit trafficking in weapons in general, is exacerbated by a lack of either local or international controls of land and maritime borders in certain States of the region.

Europe

73. During the cold war, large numbers of weapons, including small arms and light weapons, were accumulated in Europe. After the end of the cold war in many European States, weapon holdings have been reduced through destruction or cascading. In some instances, the grave weakening or even collapse of State structures, and in particular the dissolution of the Soviet Union, has led to a greater availability of small arms and light weapons that is outside State control. The surfeit of weapons has often aggravated the general feeling of insecurity and, in some cases, fuelled ethnic confrontation and even civil war. The former Yugoslavia and Albania are the worst examples.

74. The above-mentioned developments, combined with serious economic difficulties, have also had an impact on other regions of the world in the form of an increased flow of weapons from sometimes poorly controlled stocks on the territory of some countries of Eastern Europe and of stationed forces in the former German Democratic Republic.

75. Although many European countries reduced weapons production after the end of the cold war, Europe still has significant domestic capabilities for the production of weapons.

76. In some European countries, insurgent movements, terrorist groups and criminal gangs are involved in the illicit use of and trafficking in small arms and light weapons.

Commonalities among affected regions

77. The observations made regarding some regions, subregions and States can be summarized in the following commonalities:

(a) There is an apparent link between the availability of weapons, trafficking in drugs and arms, and the level of violence;

(b) Transfers of weapons are often unchecked owing to inadequate controls over long and porous borders;

(c) The crime and violence arising from the availability of small arms and light weapons have made it more difficult to conduct development projects and programmes that address the root causes of conflict. This has led to a decline in economic assistance and investment from donors. Also, States must use more of their scarce resources to provide security and relief to the victims of violence;

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(d) Illicit trafficking in arms in some regions has violent and destabilizing effects;

(e) Where a culture of weapons exists, it may be more easily transformed into a culture of violence, particularly when tension escalates due to the root causes of conflict;

(f) In some regions, young people are often the victims and perpetrators of violence, particularly where high unemployment and political hostilities exist. They are easily recruited and indoctrinated into violent groups and are more likely to follow a path of violence, even when political hostilities cease;

(g) National efforts to address excessive and destabilizing accumulations of small arms are often insufficient owing to the magnitude of the problem and scarce resources. In many instances, multilateral and regional efforts have been undertaken;¹³

(h) Another reality in some regions is that an adequate level of security is necessary to solve the problems associated with the excessive and destabilizing accumulations of small arms and light weapons;

(i) Most of the States and regions experiencing problems with armed violence stemming from the excessive and destabilizing accumulation and transfer of small arms and light weapons also have problems of poverty and lack economic development. These issues are linked;

(j) In some regions, drug control efforts have increased the demand for small arms and light weapons by both law enforcement authorities and drug traffickers, thereby raising the level of violence.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

78. The Panel's recommendations are comprised first of measures to reduce the excessive and destabilizing accumulation and transfer of small arms and light weapons in specific regions of the world where such accumulations and transfers have already taken place. These are followed by measures to prevent such accumulations and transfers from occurring in future.

79. The Panel recommends the following reduction measures:

(a) The United Nations should adopt a proportional and integrated approach to security and development, including the identification of appropriate assistance for the internal security forces initiated with respect to Mali and other West African States, and extend it to other regions of the world where conflicts come to an end and where serious problems of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons have to be dealt with urgently. The donor community should support this new approach in regard to such regions of the world;

(b) The United Nations should support, with the assistance of the donor community, all appropriate post-conflict initiatives related to disarmament and

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demobilization, such as the disposal and destruction of weapons, including weapons turn-in programmes sponsored locally by governmental and non-governmental organizations;

(c) Once national conciliation is reached, the United Nations should assist in convening an inter-Afghan forum to prepare, inter alia, a schedule to account for, retrieve and destroy the small arms and light weapons left unaccounted for in Afghanistan;

(d) In view of the problems stemming from an excess of small arms and light weapons left over from many internal conflicts and the lessons learned from the peacekeeping operations of the United Nations, two sets of guidelines should be developed in order to:

(i) Assist negotiators of peace settlements in developing plans to disarm combatants, particularly as concerns light weapons, small arms and munitions, and to include therein plans for the collection of weapons and their disposal, preferably by destruction;

(ii) Provide assistance to peacekeeping missions in implementing their mandates, based on peace settlements;

Former peace negotiators and members of peacekeeping operations of the United Nations should be consulted in the preparation of such guidelines. In this connection, consideration should be given to the establishment of a disarmament component in peacekeeping operations undertaken by the United Nations.

(e) States and regional organizations, where applicable, should strengthen international and regional cooperation among police, intelligence, customs and border control officials in combating the illicit circulation of and trafficking in small arms and light weapons and in suppressing criminal activities related to the use of these weapons;

(f) The establishment of mechanisms and regional networks for information sharing for the above-mentioned purposes should be encouraged;

(g) All such weapons which are not under legal civilian possession, and which are not required for the purposes of national defence and internal security, should be collected and destroyed by States as expeditiously as possible.

80. The Panel recommends the following prevention measures:

(a) All States should implement the recommendations contained in the guidelines for international arms transfers in the context of General Assembly resolution 46/36 H of 6 December 1991, adopted by the Disarmament Commission in 1996;¹⁴

(b) All States should determine in their national laws and regulations which arms are permitted for civilian possession and the conditions under which they can be used;

(c) All States should ensure that they have in place adequate laws, regulations and administrative procedures to exercise effective control over the legal possession of small arms and light weapons and over their transfer in order, inter alia, to prevent illicit trafficking;

(d) States emerging from conflict should, as soon as practicable, impose or reimpose licensing requirements on all civilian possession of small arms and light weapons on their territory;

(e) All States should exercise restraint with respect to the transfer of the surplus of small arms and light weapons manufactured solely for the possession of and use by the military and police forces. All States should also consider the possibility of destroying all such surplus weapons;¹⁵

(f) All States should ensure the safeguarding of such weapons against loss through theft or corruption, in particular from storage facilities;

(g) The United Nations should urge relevant organizations, such as the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol) and the World Customs Organization, as well as all States and their relevant national agencies, to closely cooperate in the identification of the groups and individuals engaged in illicit trafficking activities, and the modes of transfer used by them;

(h) All States and relevant regional and international organizations should intensify their cooperative efforts against all aspects of illicit trafficking mentioned in the present report that are related to the proliferation and accumulation of small arms and light weapons;

(i) The United Nations should encourage the adoption and implementation of regional or subregional moratoriums, where appropriate, on the transfer and manufacture of small arms and light weapons, as agreed upon by the States concerned;

(j) Other regional organizations should take note, and make use, as appropriate, of the work of the Organization of American States in preparing a draft inter-American convention against the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, ammunition, explosives and other related materials;

(k) The United Nations should consider the possibility of convening an international conference on the illicit arms trade in all its aspects, based on the issues identified in the present report;

(l) To assist in preventing the illicit trafficking in and circulation of small arms and light weapons, the United Nations should initiate studies on the following:

- (i) The feasibility of establishing a reliable system for marking all such weapons from the time of their manufacture;
- (ii) The feasibility of restricting the manufacture and trade of such weapons to the manufacturers and dealers authorized by States, and of establishing a database of such authorized manufacturers and dealers;

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(m) The United Nations should initiate a study on all aspects of the problem of ammunition and explosives.

Notes

¹ At the invitation of the Canadian Council for International Peace and Security, the Chairman and the experts from Belgium Canada, Finland and Germany participated in a workshop on international efforts to constrain light weapons, held at Ottawa on 25 January 1997.

² Replies were received from: Belarus, Colombia, Italy (on behalf of the States members of the European Union), Jamaica, Mexico, Singapore, Turkey, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

³ The following reports were made available to the Panel: report of the International Commission of Inquiry (Rwanda) (S/1996/195, annex); report of the International Commission of Inquiry concerning Burundi (S/1996/682, annex I); Saharo-Sahelian advisory mission: report on Mali, 1995; report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Somalia (S/1996/42); informal paper of the Disarmament Commission concerning guidelines for international arms transfers in the context of General Assembly resolution 46/36 H of 6 December 1991; report of the Secretary-General on measures to regulate firearms (E/CN.15/1997/4 and Corr.1); United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, "The social impacts of light weapons availability and proliferation", (discussion paper No. 59, March 1995); study on ways and means of promoting transparency in international transfers of conventional arms: report of the group of experts appointed by the Secretary-General in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 43/75 I of 7 December 1988 (A/46/301, annex).

⁴ A list of persons invited to the regular sessions and inter-sessional workshops of the Panel is given in appendix IV.

⁵ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1997, Supplement No. 10 (E/1997/30-E/CN.15/1997/21), chap. I, sect. B, draft resolution II. The draft resolution was subsequently adopted by the Council (resolution 1997/28 of 21 July 1997).

⁶ See "Global Humanitarian Emergencies, 1996", paper released by the United States Mission to the United Nations (New York, February 1996).

⁷ See United Nations Children's Fund, The State of the World's Children, 1996 (Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press, 1996) and the report of the expert of the Secretary-General, Ms. Graça Machel, on the impact of armed conflict on children (A/51/306 and Add.1).

⁸ Home-made weapons, including those referred to as "zip-guns", are simple in design and can be constructed by unskilled people with little knowledge of such weapons. The material used may be found in almost every house or rubbish dump. Any available type of ammunition can be modified to fit these weapons.

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⁹ Virginia Hart Ezell, Report on International Small Arms Production and Proliferation (Alexandria, Virginia, Institute for Research on Small Arms in International Security, March 1995), p. 9.

¹⁰ As noted, inter alia, in paragraph 14 of the guidelines for international arms transfers in the context of General Assembly resolution 46/36 H of 6 December 1991 (see Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-first Session, Supplement No. 42 (A/51/42), annex I); and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights on 25 June 1993 (A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III).

¹¹ See paragraph 7 of the guidelines for international arms transfers in the context of General Assembly resolution 46/36 H of 6 December 1991 (Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-first Session, Supplement No. 42 (A/51/42), annex I).

¹² The Summit Declaration of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation held in May 1997 called for international action to prevent the abuse of refugee conventions and to halt activities which help terrorist groups to collect funds for their activities in South Asia.

¹³ These include efforts by the Organization of American States and some States within the Southern African Development Community, and the Framework Treaty on Democratic Security signed by the Presidents of the Central American States in 1995.

¹⁴ Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-first Session, Supplement No. 42 (A/51/42), annex I.

¹⁵ The term "surplus" indicates serviceable and unserviceable small arms and light weapons held in stockpiles by military and police forces and the illicit weapons seized by such forces that they no longer need.

APPENDIX I

Joint appeal on small arms, issued at the conclusion of the first regional workshop of the Panel of Governmental Experts on Small Arms, held at Pretoria from 23 to 25 September 1996

1. We, the participants from Africa in the regional workshop held at Pretoria, voice our shared concern over the following consequences of the accumulation, proliferation and use of small arms:

(a) Incidents of violence that claim the lives mostly of innocent civilians;

(b) Acts of criminality ranging from poaching, cattle-rustling and armed robberies to hijacking and terrorism;

(c) The corrosive impact on civil society by the creation of a vicious circle between an acuter sense of personal insecurity and a higher demand for small arms;

(d) Competing claims on scarce resources for the provision of immediate relief and rehabilitation to victims of violence, and for investment in long-term socio-economic development;

(e) The destabilizing effect on the African region owing to the mass movement of internally displaced people and refugees fleeing from armed conflicts.

2. No single cause can fully explain the recent rise in incidents of violence and criminality resulting from the use of a category of weapons that has existed for decades, if not centuries. Several explanations can, however, be offered:

(a) A period of transition from military regimes to democratization, resulting in the easy availability of weapons hitherto belonging to military personnel;

(b) A parallel process of state formation and political institution-building in societies experimenting with non-violent instruments of political change;

(c) Demographic trends, with a larger number of younger people seeking economic opportunities and resorting to violence to gain attention and access to resources;

(d) The successful culmination of national liberation movements, leaving behind arsenals of weapons readily available for purchase, resale and use by individuals and organized gangs motivated by personal profit or greed for power;

(e) Collusion between some private arms dealers and profiteers from the illicit trade in drugs, precious stones and ivory.

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3. We see our new democracies facing a twin threat arising from the uncontrolled accumulation, proliferation and use of small arms:

(a) Spill-overs from neighbouring countries, particularly when there is ethnic affinity across national territorial frontiers and people uprooted through violent resort to the same in their efforts to obtain shelter;

(b) The challenge of reintegrating former military personnel into civil society, especially when soldiers trained to fight a war find a common cause with rebels opposed to the establishment of democratic institutions.

4. A failure of the democratic experiment in Africa will not be just sad. It will be chaotic, as it may signify not a return of military regimes but a breakdown of the institution of the State. Believing that the best guarantee for fostering democratic institutions is to build up societal resistance to violence as an instrument of political change, we are ready to contain, control and discourage individual and group resort to small arms. Our porous geographical frontiers and ethnic affinities across national boundaries make it imperative that we adopt collective regional measures to:

(a) Combat arms smuggling, money laundering, stock-stealing, poaching, drug trafficking, vehicle theft and illegal immigration;

(b) Harmonize national legislation in order to ensure that criminals escaping from justice in a country with stringent laws do not find shelter in another country with lax regulations;

(c) Standardize licensing procedures for the possession of arms in order to establish accountability;

(d) Pool relevant intelligence information, police activity and customs controls in order to detect and apprehend the illicit transboundary movement of small arms;

(e) Enter into agreements for extradition.

5. We are fully aware that concentration on small arms as the primary instruments of violence in our societies will not be sufficient unless we simultaneously address and resolve the causes of violence. We resolve to create a future of economic opportunity for our younger population, whose education and upbringing has been disrupted by protracted armed conflicts. We will work towards the integration, rather than the alienation, of former combatants and military personnel into civil society. To promote societal resistance to violence, we will rely even more upon our traditional customs of consensus-building.

6. We call upon research institutes and non-governmental organizations to join us in creating public awareness of the direct and indirect consequences of the accumulation, proliferation and use of small arms.

7. We urge the donor community to make provision in their developmental assistance policies for programmes to reintegrate demobilized military personnel into civil society.
8. We seek international expertise in training the trainers to establish vocational and professional institutes for our younger population.
9. We welcome recent initiatives by leading donors to integrate developmental assistance with further support for democratic institutions.
10. We ask the United Nations to ensure that its post-conflict peace programmes include arrangements for the destruction and disposal of weapons and for the trade-off of weapons and equipment for gainful employment.
11. We request the Panel of Governmental Experts on Small Arms to give full consideration to this joint appeal in its deliberations and to append it to the report to be submitted to the General Assembly in pursuance of its resolution 50/70 B.

(Signed)

Mr. Tome Picasso,
Ministry of National Defence, Mozambique

Mr. Hopelong U Ipinge,
Deputy Permanent Secretary,
Ministry of Defence, Namibia

Captain S. H. Norman,
Deputy Minister of Defence, Sierra Leone

General Mohamed Nur Galal, Somalia

Dr. Timothy L. L. Dlamini,
Principal Secretary,
Ministry of Defence, Swaziland

Major General Michael Nyambuya,
Army Headquarters, Zimbabwe

APPENDIX II

Statement on small arms, issued at the conclusion of the second regional workshop of the Panel of Governmental Experts on Small Arms held at San Salvador, on 16 and 17 January 1997

1. We, the invitees to the second regional workshop of the Panel of Governmental Experts on Small Arms:
 - (a) Associate ourselves with the joint appeal on small arms, issued at the first regional workshop, held at Pretoria in September 1996;
 - (b) Share the concerns over the incidence of increased violence and acts of criminality resulting from the illegal accumulation and use of small arms by individuals and groups.
2. The countries of the Central American region are undergoing a unique experience. Weapons are not manufactured in the region itself but small arms of every conceivable variety are readily available, cheap to buy, easy to conceal and frequently change hands in the region. The geographical location of the region makes it a convenient and much frequented route for the illicit arms trade. Established networks of highly organized gangs dealing in narcotics and weaponry have made the region a favourite haven for money laundering and the investment of drug profits.
3. Arms by themselves do not cause violent conflict. It is economic and social inequities which generate violence. The easy availability of arms, however, undoubtedly affects the intensity, frequency and duration of violence.
4. For decades, the unorganized majority of the civilian population in the region became victim to violence by an organized minority. The region lost hundreds of thousands of human lives and millions of people were displaced.
5. A first step towards reversing the havoc inflicted on the region was the successful conclusion of peace agreements. Ceasefires cannot guarantee lasting peace unless they are accompanied by a determined effort to ensure that the huge surpluses of weapons circulating in the region do not fall into the hands of criminal elements.
6. The process of democratization and demilitarization of the region is by now fairly well established. But the social and political frictions which generated wars in the past are far from being resolved.
7. The countries of the region are now ready to put violent strife behind them and look ahead to an era of uninterrupted peace and prosperity. Now is the time to heal, to rebuild and to rehabilitate. Now is the time to address the underlying causes of the recurring resort to violence. Now is the time to create opportunities for the fullest realization of the most valuable asset of the region, its human resources. Now is the time to reintegrate the former combatants into civil society.

8. We invite the members of the Panel of Governmental Experts on Small Arms to join the efforts of the region to implement programmes for the collection of weapons and develop other initiatives for the gainful employment of former combatants.
9. We urge the United Nations to launch a worldwide campaign to mobilize public opinion and build societal resistance to violence and the proliferation of small arms.
10. We call upon the international community to fully support the implementation and verification of the firm and lasting peace agreement of Guatemala of 29 December 1996.
11. We support a continuation of the dialogue and exchange of experiences between and among regions faced with the tasks of post-conflict peace-building, reintegration of former combatants and immediate measures to curb the accumulation and use of small arms.
12. We commit ourselves to the creation and strengthening of programmes for education for peace and non-violence.
13. We request the members of the Panel to include the present statement in its entirety in the report of the Secretary-General to be submitted to the General Assembly in pursuance of its resolution 50/70 B.

(Signed)

Dr. Daniel Garcia-Pena Jaramillo,
Special Advisor to the President
of the Republic of Colombia

Ambassador Ricardo Castaneda-Cornejo,
Permanent Representative of
El Salvador to the United Nations

Ambassador Fabiola Fuente,
Deputy Permanent Representative of
of Guatemala to the United Nations

Dr. Angel Antonio Comte Cojulun,
Director-General of National Police of
Guatemala

Lieutenant Colonel Nestor Ogilvie,
Chairman, Association of Caribbean
Commissioners of Police, Grenada

Dr. Mario Castellon Duarte,
Minister Counsellor, Permanent Mission
of Nicaragua to the United Nations

Dr. Alejandro Bendana,
Director, Centre for International
Studies, Nicaragua

Dr. Carlos Augusto Herrera Rodriguez,
Superior Public Attorney of the
Republic of Panama, Panama

APPENDIX III

Call upon Afghanistan, issued at the conclusion of the third
regional workshop of the Panel of Governmental Experts on
Small Arms, held at Kathmandu on 22 and 23 May 1997

1. We, the invitees to the third regional workshop of the Panel of Governmental Experts on Small Arms associate ourselves with the joint appeal issued at Pretoria on 25 September 1996 and the statement signed in San Salvador on 17 January 1997.
2. We share the growing concern among other subregions over the globalization of crime, the transboundary movement of illicit and covert arms trade, and the operational parallelism between contraband drug deals and weapons transfers.
3. Our compelling attention in the subcontinent goes to Afghanistan which epitomizes the destabilizing consequences of the excessive accumulation, proliferation and use of small arms. Afghanistan today is the world's leading centre for unaccounted weapons, with at least 10 million in circulation within the country. Between 550 and 700 of the 1,000 stinger missiles supplied during the 1980s have simply disappeared among the rugged mountainous terrain of Afghanistan and could reemerge anywhere in the subregion or outside it. Roughly one half of the weapons constantly changing hands within Afghanistan arrived there during the cold war, mostly in state-to-state transfers. At present, nearly 60 per cent of the weapons flowing into the country is due to illicit deals involving a circuitous network of manufacturers, buyers, suppliers and distributors operating outside the control of state authority. The domestic manufacture of weapons, once considered a cottage industry in Afghanistan, is no longer as lucrative a trade in view of the cheaper and wider variety of weapons readily available from external sources.
4. The end of the cold war has not taken away the geo-strategic significance of Afghanistan, located at the outer rim of resource-rich Central Asia and a possible conduit for future supply of natural gas to the subregion. Its long, unmanned and porous territorial frontiers provide an easy inlet by which to move, sell or transfer the surplus weaponry from the countries former members of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Its fiercely independent people are inclined and equipped to defend their freedom by resorting to arms when necessary. The easy availability of weapons and ammunition to rival factions in Afghanistan is a disincentive to the peaceful political settlement that is sorely overdue to resolve a two-decade-old conflict. As in other protracted internal conflicts fought with light weapons and irregular forces, civilians are the major victims in Afghanistan. Those who have fled as refugees now number 15 million. Among those who have stayed are another 21.6 million of internally displaced persons.
5. The spillover from the continuing inflow of weapons and ammunition to Afghanistan eats away at the political and social fabric of a subcontinent inhabited by one fifth of humanity. Weapons originating in Afghanistan have been used in acts of terror, subversion, criminality and banditry throughout South Asia. Harmonization of state-to-state relations is hindered by the

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activities of non-state actors operating at times in collusion with organized crime networks and providing financial, ideological or logistical support to each other. An alarming increase in delinquency and drug addiction is threatening to claim the energies and human resource potential of younger population in the subregion flanked by Myanmar, as the largest, and Afghanistan, as the second largest producer of opium in the world. Money raised by the sale of drugs is used to buy weapons to feed insurgencies, fight armed conflicts and commit banditry. The borderlines between political and criminal violence become blurred as precious time is lost in waiting for the overall settlement of long-standing issues which become more entangled as the search continues for a lasting resolution of problems firmly entrenched in history.

6. United in a commonly shared concern for the lives and well-being of the people of the subregion:

(a) We call upon the Panel of Governmental Experts on Small Arms to launch a worldwide campaign to raise global consciousness of the consequences of the inflow to, and outflow of, weapons from Afghanistan;

(b) We urge the United Nations to convene an inter-Afghan forum for the preparation of a strict schedule to account for, retrieve or destroy the weapons left unaccounted for in the country;

(c) We express our earnest hope that bilaterally and severally all countries in the subregion would pool their expertise to monitor, control and apprehend criminal activity related to illicit purchase, sale and transfer of small arms;

(d) We request the Chairman of the Panel of Governmental Experts on Small Arms to append the present call in its entirety to the report of the Secretary-General to be submitted to the General Assembly in pursuance of its resolution 50/70 B.

(Signed)

Brigadier Muhammad S. Anam Khan,
Director General, Bangladesh Institute of
International and Strategic Studies, Dhaka

Rohan Gunaratna (Sri Lanka),
British Chevening Scholar, University of
St. Andrews, United Kingdom of Great Britain
and Northern Ireland

Colonel Nara Bahadur Gurung,
Royal Nepalese Army, Kathmandu

Niaz A. Naik,
Secretary General, Pakistan Security and
Development Association, Islamabad

Jasjit Singh,
Director, Institute for Defence Studies and
Analyses, New Dehli

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APPENDIX IV

Persons invited to the regular sessions and regional workshops
of the Panel of Governmental Experts on Small Arms

Brigadier Mujamid Alam
International Commission of Inquiry on Rwanda

Mr. Ian Anthony
Project Director, International Arms Trade
Stockholm International Peace Research Institute
Frosunda Solna, Sweden

Mr. Tika Ram Aryal
Under Secretary, Ministry of Defense
Kathmandu

Mr. Rodrigo Avila
Director of National Civil Police
San Salvador

Mr. Durga Prasad Bhandari
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Kathmandu

Mr. P. Batchelor
Centre for Conflict Resolution
Cape Town, South Africa

Dr. Alejandro Bendaña
Director, Centre for International Studies
Managua

Lieutenant Colonel H. J. Boshoff
Directorate Operations
South African National Defence Force
Pretoria

Supr. W. Brand
Firearms Investigation Unit
South African Police Service
Pretoria

Colonel Peter Brandt
Military Attache
Embassy of Germany in Mexico

Mr. A. Burger
Director
Central Firearms Register
South African Police Service
Pretoria

Dr. Jose Marinero Caceres
Ministry of External Affairs
San Salvador

Mr. Eduardo Calix
Ministry of External Affairs
San Salvador

Ambassador Ricardo G. Castaneda-Cornejo
Permanent Representative of El Salvador to the United Nations

Professor J. Cock
University of the Witwatersrand
Johannesburg, South Africa

Captain E. B. Dewey
Firearms Investigation Unit, SAPS
Pretoria

Dr. Timothy L. L. Dlamini
Principal Secretary, Ministry of Defence
Mbabane

Dr. Mario Castellon Duarte
Minister Counsellor
Permanent Mission of Nicaragua to the United Nations

Mr. Lee Feinstein
Policy Planning Staff
United States Department of State
Washington, D.C.

Ambassador Fabiola Fuentes Orellana
Deputy Permanent Representative of Guatemala to the United Nations

General Mohamed Nur Galal
Somalia

Virginia Gamba
Institute of Security Studies
Midrand, South Africa

Natalie Goldring
British American Security Information Council
Washington, D.C.

Mr. Francisco Gonzalez
Ministry of External Affairs
San Salvador, El Salvador

Colonel Felix Ranulfo Ramirez Gonzalez
Ministry of Defense
San Salvador, El Salvador

Mr. Rohan Gunaratna
Scholar in Residence
University of St. Andrews
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Colonel Nara Bahadur Gurung
Royal Nepalese Army
Kathmandu

Mr. David Gutierrez
Coordinator, Movimiento Patriótico Contra la Delincuencia
San Salvador

Mr. Kumar P. Gyawali
Foreign Secretary
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Nepal

Mr. James Hayes
Coordinator, International Firearms Issues
Canadian Firearms Centre
Ottawa

Professor M. Hough
University of Pretoria
Pretoria

Mr. Hopelong U. Ipinge
Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Defence
Namibia

Dr. Daniel Garcia-Peña Jaramillo
Special Advisor to the President of Colombia
Bogota

Senior Supervisor R. LeRoux
Central Firearms Register, SAPS
Pretoria

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COOPERATION BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE AGENCY FOR CULTURAL AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION

Report of the Secretary-General

I. INTRODUCTION

1. On 16 October 1995, the General Assembly adopted without a vote resolution 50/3, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation". In that resolution, the Assembly, affirming the need to establish cooperation, or strengthen such cooperation where it already exists, between the United Nations and the Agency in areas of common interest, noted with satisfaction the support expressed by the heads of State and Government of countries that use French as a common language for United Nations activities and their desire to begin a new partnership with the institutions of the United Nations system.

2. The General Assembly, also noting the complementarity of the activities of the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation (ACTC) and the United Nations, as well as the programmes and other institutions of the United Nations system, invited the Secretary-General of the United Nations to take the necessary steps, in consultation with the Secretary-General of the Agency, to promote cooperation between the two secretariats, particularly by encouraging meetings that enable their representatives to consult one another on projects, measures and procedures that would facilitate and expand cooperation and coordination between the two organizations.

3. In the same resolution, the General Assembly decided to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-second session the item entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Agency for Cultural and Technical

* A/52/150 and Corr.1.

Cooperation", and requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on the implementation of the resolution.

4. The present report is submitted pursuant to that request.

II. COOPERATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE AGENCY FOR CULTURAL AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION

5. Until 1995, General Assembly resolution 33/18 of 10 November 1978 had been the basis for cooperation between the United Nations and the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation. In that resolution, the Assembly invited the Agency to participate in its sessions and in those of its subsidiary organs as an observer. By 1995, in addition to the usual consultations at the meetings, some United Nations departments and other entities that have mandates relating to the general thrust of the Agency's work were already collaborating with ACTC at the country level.

6. In the context of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 50/3, specifically paragraph 4 thereof, and in order to strengthen and enhance existing cooperation between the two organizations and to extend it to new areas such as preventive diplomacy, peacekeeping and peace-building, a draft agreement on cooperation between the United Nations and the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation was prepared in close consultation with the ACTC secretariat.

7. On 25 June 1997, the cooperation agreement between the United Nations and ACTC was signed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Secretary-General of ACTC. The full text of the agreement appears as an annex to the present report.

8. The agreement aims at strengthening relations between the two organizations through consultations on all matters of common interest, particularly in political, economic, social, scientific and cultural areas. Subject to such decisions as may be taken by their competent bodies concerning attendance at their meetings by observers, they shall invite each other to send representatives to their respective meetings where observers are allowed, whenever matters of shared interest are discussed. It also provides that the United Nations and ACTC may, through special arrangements, decide to act jointly in the implementation of projects that are of mutual interest. They may, whenever desirable, set up commissions, committees or other technical or advisory bodies to advise them on matters of common concern.

9. The agreement also contains provisions on ensuring effective cooperation between the secretariats of the two organizations and on arranging for the exchange, upon the request of the other, of information and documentation relating to specific areas or activities of common interest with a view to ensuring a better complementarity of action. In addition, each organization may bring to the attention of the other issues that, in its view, require joint coordinated action by the two organizations.

10. In remarks made at the signing ceremony, the Secretary-General of the United Nations said that the agreement reinforced the ties that had existed for almost two decades between the two institutions in a number of areas, particularly in the political, socio-economic, scientific and cultural domains. He expressed the hope that the agreement would lead to a more productive relationship enabling the two organizations to better serve the world community. The Secretary-General of ACTC reciprocated with similar sentiments, and thanked the Secretary-General of the United Nations for his efforts in that regard.

III. COOPERATION ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN OR PLANNED BY THE ORGANIZATIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

11. While some organizations of the United Nations system, in particular the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), have long-standing cooperation arrangements with ACTC, others, in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 50/3, have indicated a strong interest in developing close collaboration with the Agency. Included in this latter group are the United Nations political and economic and social departments (Department of Political Affairs, Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department for Economic and Social Affairs) and the World Health Organization. The political departments of the United Nations Secretariat consider the Agency's support for the rule of law, promotion of human rights, democratization, human capacity-building and electoral assistance as strong potential areas, particularly in respect of cooperation for peacekeeping and peace-building programmes.

12. The Department for Economic and Social Affairs plans to cooperate with ACTC in the areas of governance, public administration and finance, civil service reforms, energy and environment through the organization of training workshops, seminars, meetings and conferences and the provision of technical assistance. The Department also envisions cooperation in the follow-up to major United Nations conferences, especially the World Summit for Social Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women. It has also indicated its interest in providing substantive support to ACTC training projects in relation to women's rights.

13. The United Nations Centre for Human Rights has continued and intensified its contacts with ACTC and cooperated in organizing a number of joint activities, including the following:

(a) Training programmes at Geneva and Bordeaux from 11 to 22 October 1993 in the handling of information technology in the field of human rights; 19 participants from 13 African countries were selected for this course;

(b) A regional seminar in Abidjan from 20 to 24 June 1994 on techniques for drafting and submitting the periodic reports that States parties to international human rights instruments are required to submit to the committees established under those instruments. The seminar brought together 28 participants from 14 Francophone African countries that were experiencing difficulties in drafting and submitting their reports;

(c) A training seminar on the drafting of national human rights reports at Bordeaux International School from 7 to 21 October 1994. The seminar was attended by 25 participants from 10 Francophone African countries.

14. Two United Nations funds and programmes, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), have signed cooperation agreements with ACTC that will be used as a basis for enhanced collaboration between the two organizations, particularly in support of field-level activities.

15. UNESCO and ACTC have maintained very close ties for many years. A formal cooperation agreement was signed between the two organizations in 1976. In 1990, this cooperation was intensified when the two organizations signed an additional protocol to the 1976 framework cooperation agreement, establishing, inter alia, consultative and permanent cooperation mechanisms through joint commissions, which have made it possible to develop and implement a number of specific projects in the fields of culture and education with a view to ensuring harmonious complementarity to activities in member States. Moreover, UNESCO takes part in all major events organized by the Agency, and the Agency participates in events sponsored by UNESCO.

16. In the field of education, emphasis is placed on basic formal and informal education, in particular the production of teaching aids and manuals, distance learning, teacher training and technical and vocational training. A working meeting is to be held in the near future in order to specify joint activities that could be the subject of operational projects.

17. In the field of culture, UNESCO and ACTC are cooperating closely in the implementation of the International Fund for the Promotion of the Study of African Languages and Cultures (FIDELCA) programme. Moreover, in 1997 UNESCO took part in, and contributed to, the organization of the Market for African Art and Entertainment (MASA), established in 1993 by ACTC and the Government of Côte d'Ivoire.

18. The World Health Organization has indicated its strong desire for future joint efforts with ACTC in substantive areas of their shared mandates.

19. The information on activities contained in the earlier sections of the present report indicates that collaboration between the United Nations and ACTC has begun. It is envisaged that the agreements that have now been signed between United Nations organizations and ACTC will be the basis for increased collaboration.

Annex

COOPERATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS AND
THE AGENCY FOR CULTURAL AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION

Considering the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations (hereinafter referred to as the UN) which calls, inter alia, for the promotion of regional and international cooperation to solve political, economic and social problems and to ensure respect for human rights in the world,

Considering the provisions of the Convention and of the Charter of the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation (hereinafter referred to as the ACTC), which calls, inter alia, for the promotion of cooperation among its members and to encourage the emergence of a new solidarity, thus constituting an additional factor in the coming together of the peoples through the permanent dialogue of civilisations,

Recalling the relevant resolutions of the UN General Assembly, in particular resolution 33/18 by which ACTC was granted the observer status and resolution 50/3 calling for intensified cooperation between the two organizations,

Conscious of the need for closer cooperation between the UN and its specialized agencies on the one hand, and the ACTC and its specialized institutions on the other, in matters of common interest, and desirous of further enhancing and strengthening such cooperation,

The United Nations and the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation

HAVE AGREED AS FOLLOWS:

Article I

AREAS OF COOPERATION

The UN and ACTC undertake to cooperate in the following areas, through their appropriate bodies:

1. Political,
2. Economic and social,
3. Scientific and cultural.

Article II

COOPERATION AND CONSULTATION

The UN and the ACTC shall hold consultations, as needed, on all matters of common interest with a view to coordinating and harmonizing their positions.

Article III

RECIPROCAL REPRESENTATION

1. Subject to such decisions as may be taken by its competent bodies concerning the attendance of its meetings by observers, and subject to the rules of procedure of the bodies concerned, the United Nations shall invite the ACTC to send representatives to United Nations meetings and conferences where observers are allowed, whenever matters of interest to the ACTC are discussed.
2. Subject to such decisions as may be taken by its competent bodies concerning the attendance of its meetings by observers, the ACTC shall invite the UN to send representatives to all its meetings and conferences where observers are allowed, whenever matters of interest to the UN are discussed.

Article IV

EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION AND DOCUMENTS

Subject to such arrangements as may be deemed necessary to safeguard the confidential nature of certain information and documents, the two organizations shall exchange information and documents on questions of common interest, in particular:

1. The UN shall make available to the ACTC, upon its request, information on any national or multinational projects and programmes that are undertaken by the UN in the political, economic, social, scientific and cultural fields, with its assistance or under its auspices in States members both of the UN and of the ACTC, and shall consider any proposals that may be communicated to it by the ACTC with a view to ensuring a better complementarity of action and a more effective coordination between the two organizations.

2. The ACTC shall make available to the UN, upon the latter's request, information on projects and programmes in the political, economic, social, scientific and cultural fields that relate to the development of ACTC activities in the latter's Member States. It shall consider any proposals concerning such projects and programmes that may be submitted to it by the UN with a view to ensuring better complementarity of action and a more effective coordination between the two organizations.
3. The UN may bring to the attention of the ACTC issues that, in its view, require joint and coordinated action by the two organizations.
4. The ACTC may bring to the attention of the UN those issues that, in its opinion, call for cooperation between the two organizations.

Article V

STATISTICAL AND LEGAL INFORMATION

The UN and the ACTC shall, subject to their respective rules and regulations, pool their efforts to:

- ensure optimum utilization of statistical and legal information and efficient use of their resources to compile, analyze, publish and disseminate such information;
- reduce the workload on governments and organizations from which such information is collected.

Article VI

ADMINISTRATIVE AND TECHNICAL

1. Should the growth of the UN and ACTC activities in fields of common interest so dictate, either organization may request the cooperation of the other whenever the latter organization is in a position to help develop the former's activities.
2. Each organization shall endeavour, insofar as possible and in compliance with its constituent instruments and decisions of its competent bodies, to respond favourably to such requests for cooperation in accordance with procedures to be mutually agreed upon.

3. Similarly, insofar as possible, and within the context of their constituent instruments and decisions of their respective competent bodies, the two organizations shall assist each other in the training of various categories of staff, especially administrative and conference staff as well as specialists in legal, economic, social, scientific and cultural fields.

Article VII

JOINT ACTION

1. The UN and the ACTC may, through special arrangements, decide to act jointly in the implementation of projects that are of common interest. The special arrangements shall define the modalities for the participation of each organization in such projects and shall determine the expenses payable by each of them.
2. The UN and the ACTC may, whenever they consider it desirable, set up commissions, committees or other technical or advisory bodies on terms and conditions, to be mutually agreed upon in each case, to advise them on matters of common interest.

Article VIII

COOPERATION BETWEEN THE SECRETARIATS

The Secretary-General of the UN and the Secretary-General of ACTC shall make appropriate administrative arrangements to ensure effective cooperation and liaison between the secretariats of the two organizations.

Article IX

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENT

1. The UN Secretariat and the ACTC Secretariat shall consult each other as needed on matters relating to the present agreement.
2. The UN Secretariat and the ACTC Secretariat may, if necessary, agree on supplementary administrative arrangements for the implementation of the present agreement.

Article X

ENTRY INTO FORCE, AMENDMENTS AND DURATION

1. This agreement shall enter into force on the date of its signature by the duly authorized representatives of the two organizations.
2. This agreement may be amended by mutual consent of the UN and the ACTC provided one of the parties presents the proposed amendments to the other in writing. The amendment shall enter into force after a period of three months following the expression of such consent.
3. Either of the parties may terminate this agreement by giving six months written notice to the other party.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned representatives of the Secretariat of the United Nations and the Secretariat of the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation, being duly authorized by their respective authorities, have signed the present agreement in duplicate.

Signed this 25th day of June 1997 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York.

K. A. Annan
For the United Nations

Jean-Louis Roy
For the Agency for Cultural and
Technical Cooperation



General Assembly

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Advancement of women

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the General Assembly the report on the activities of the United Nations Development Fund for Women, prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 39/125 of 14 December 1984 and 50/166 of 22 December 1995.

* A/52/150 and Corr. 1.



Annex**Report on the activities of the United Nations Development Fund for Women, 1996****Contents**

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I. Introduction

1. The present report provides a review and update on the programme of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and describes initiatives undertaken by the Fund in 1996. It also highlights the response of UNIFEM to the recommendations of the external evaluation of the Fund, including an overview of the new strategy and business plan, which is in part a result of the evaluation. The report also outlines work on follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women held at Beijing in 1995 and with regard to General Assembly resolution 50/166 of 22 December 1995.

2. In its resolution 39/125 of 14 December 1984, the General Assembly mandated UNIFEM to play an innovative and catalytic role in the promotion of women's empowerment and gender equality. The Fund's mandate is: (a) to support innovative and experimental activities benefiting women, in line with national and regional priorities; (b) to serve as a catalyst, with the goal of ensuring the appropriate involvement of women in mainstream development activities; and (c) to play an innovative and catalytic role in relation to the United Nations system of development cooperation.

3. In paragraph 335 of the Platform for Action,^a the Fourth World Conference on Women affirmed the Fund's goal of increasing options and opportunities for the economic and political empowerment of women in developing countries, especially those living in poverty, so that they could contribute more effectively to and benefit from the development of their communities and countries.

4. UNIFEM has, since its inception, worked in developing countries in the regions of Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean. In 1996, UNIFEM consulted with the Office of Legal Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat to determine whether its mandate extended to work on women's empowerment in the Eastern European and Commonwealth of Independent States region. On the advice of the Office of Legal Affairs, the Consultative Committee of UNIFEM supported the expansion of the Fund's work into that region. UNIFEM is currently in the process of developing programmes in Eastern and Central Europe and the countries members of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

II. Programme

A. Overview

5. The Beijing Platform for Action gave UNIFEM new energy and direction. The Platform for Action paved the way for UNIFEM to find its niche as a strategic organization within the United Nations system providing technical and advisory support to bring about women's economic and political empowerment. In 1996, UNIFEM shifted from its more traditional approach of being a broad-based "grant" awarding organization to providing strategic and technical "know-how" and support as a catalyst and mediator within the United Nations system and with Governments and women's organizations in managing and bringing about gender-responsive development.

6. To ensure optimal programme focus and effectiveness, UNIFEM concentrates on three thematic areas within the areas of political and economic empowerment: (a) strengthening women's economic capacity as entrepreneurs and producers, especially in the context of the new trade agendas and the emergence of new technologies; (b) engendering governance and leadership that will increase women's participation in decision-making processes that shape their lives and are responsive to the livelihood needs and realities of women and communities; and (c) promoting the recognition of women's rights and women's ability to exercise those rights and the elimination of violence against women to facilitate women's full participation in their societies.

7. In working towards the economic and political empowerment of women, UNIFEM uses five strategies in its work: (a) building the capacity and leadership of women's organizations and networks to advocate for gender sensitive development; (b) undertaking advocacy activities to bring into the mainstream women's economic and political empowerment and to promote political and financial support for women; (c) facilitating effective partnerships between women's organizations, Governments, the United Nations system and the private sector; (d) undertaking pilot and demonstration projects for mainstreaming activities benefiting women; and (e) documenting and disseminating information on best practices and lessons learned.

B. Economic empowerment programme

8. Women's economic empowerment requires that women have access to and control over the means to make

a living on a sustainable basis and receive the material benefits of this access and control. Thus, economic empowerment expands on the Fund's earlier goal of increasing women's access to income and looks for longer-term sustainable benefits in terms of changes in power relationships (at the household, community and market levels) and changes in policies and legislation that constrain women's participation in and benefits from economic development.

9. In 1996, the UNIFEM economic empowerment programme had two subprogrammes: globalization and economic restructuring, with a focus on trade and new technologies; and sustainable livelihoods, including enterprise development and natural resources management.

Globalization and economic restructuring

10. In 1996, UNIFEM continued to bring decision makers, women's organizations and the private sector together in a series of regional forums to discuss the impact of globalization, in particular with regard to trade policies, on women's sustainable livelihoods and to develop strategies and programmes through which women and women's organizations could better understand local, regional and global trade policy-making processes and plan effective interventions in those processes to benefit women. UNIFEM recognizes that it is critical to ensure that, through increased access to non-traditional skills training, economic resources and new export markets, women are able to minimize the threats and maximize the opportunities resulting from globalization and trade liberalization. For example, as a follow-up to a regional meeting organized by UNIFEM at Harare for the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), a proposal has been developed to strengthen the national and regional associations of business women in the 23 member countries to influence the trade policy process and to advocate for direct support.

Sustainable livelihoods

11. Building on its long experience with enterprise development projects, UNIFEM is seeking new and better ways of helping women to become economically empowered. Environmental concerns are integrated into all enterprise development projects as a precondition for the creation of sustainable livelihoods for women. Learning from its past experiences, the Fund is moving in two directions within the subprogramme of sustainable livelihoods. First, in recognition of the limitations of direct assistance projects, UNIFEM is increasingly supporting the building and strengthening of women's organizations and

networks that enable women to take control of economic resources, to alter bargaining relationships in the home, community and marketplace, and to advocate changes in economic policies that affect their livelihoods. For example, UNIFEM collaborated with the Division for Sustainable Energy and Environment of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to develop a pilot project in the Mexican region of Yucatan called Forum on Women and Traditional Technologies, which supports indigenous women entrepreneurs and highlights and documents their indigenous knowledge. Second, in order to provide more focus to its work and to build capacity in selected areas, UNIFEM is moving towards a subsector approach through which it can reach large numbers of women facing similar threats, constraints and opportunities by providing opportunities for networking, policy dialogue, business training and sharing of best practices across sectors. For example, as part of the women's entrepreneurship and leadership development project, a pilot training workshop, "Start Your Own Business", was conducted jointly with the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East for women in the Deir El Balah area of Gaza. Based on the success of the pilot project, similar training programmes aimed at linking women with credit facilities will be offered throughout Gaza.

C. Political empowerment programme

12. Women's political empowerment requires women's increased control over their lives both inside and outside the household, and women's increased capacity to influence the direction of society. As a result, the aim of the Fund's political empowerment programme is to address the obstacles and challenges that prevent women from contributing their vision to a new world of equality, development and peace and from participating in its construction under the framework of universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated human rights.

13. In 1996, the political empowerment programme had three subprogrammes: (a) gender and governance, with emphasis on promoting gender-responsive policies, plans, programmes and legislation, and on leadership and decision-making; (b) women's human rights, with emphasis on facilitating women's increased access to the international human rights machinery; and (c) peace-building and conflict resolution, with emphasis on the role that women can play in peace-building.

Gender and governance

14. UNIFEM understands sound governance to be a system of authority that is exercised through democratic institutions and linkages based on values and practices that stress people's empowerment and participation, the State's transparency and accountability and the private sector's contribution to an enabling environment for gender-sensitive, people-centred and sustainable development.

15. The UNIFEM programme on governance focuses on: gender-responsive policy, planning, programming and legislation; gender-responsive data and statistics; and leadership and decision-making. One example was the hosting by UNIFEM of a meeting of executive heads of United Nations agencies to develop a common United Nations framework in support of the Government of India's efforts to implement the Beijing Platform for Action within the framework of its five-year development plan. UNIFEM also supported a project by eminent women involved in the implementation of the Platform who provided the Government with recommendations on how the issues outlined in the Platform could be addressed within the plan.

Women's human rights

16. In 1996, UNIFEM sharpened its focus in the area of women's human rights, concentrating on those areas in which the Fund had a strong comparative advantage and could play a facilitating and catalytic role in the implementation of the Platform For Action at the operational level. During the reporting period, the Fund concentrated its activities on: (a) bringing into the mainstream the human rights of women; (b) combatting and eliminating violence against women, including operationalizing the Trust Fund in Support of Action to Eliminate Violence against Women (see sect. VII below) in order to begin funding projects in 1997; and (c) increasing women's knowledge and use of their human rights, with a particular focus on fostering an understanding and use of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

17. One of the ways in which UNIFEM worked to bring the rights of women into the mainstream of the United Nations system was by organizing for the annual meeting of Special Rapporteurs a briefing that focused on the integration of gender concerns into human rights reporting. The briefing highlighted ways in which gender-based violations of the human rights of women could be documented in the investigations conducted by thematic and country rapporteurs appointed by the Commission on Human Rights.

Peace-building and conflict resolution

18. The political empowerment programme has been working to expand and develop its activities and support to women in the area of peace-building and conflict resolution. That work was originally focused on African countries through the establishment of the umbrella programme, African Women in Crisis, but has now expanded to include work in Central America and Asia and the Pacific.

19. UNIFEM is committed to widening the scope of its peace-building and conflict resolution work with women in the following ways: (a) supporting efforts to ensure the inclusion of women in peace-building and conflict resolution activities; (b) strengthening and raising the profile of women's contribution in that regard; and (c) providing opportunities to create stronger networks and coalitions of women's peace organizations.

20. In Burundi, UNIFEM supported a needs assessment study and the development of a training module on conflict transformation. In 1996, 25 Burundian women were trained using that module. A module for dispute resolution that can also be used for conflict resolution and peace-building is being developed.

D. Communications and external relations

21. During 1996, UNIFEM continued to promote its work on the economic and political empowerment of women in the following ways: (a) by increasing the knowledge and awareness of UNIFEM within the United Nations system and encouraging policy makers to engender development thinking and practice; (b) by diversifying and expanding its donor base in the private sector and by building and maintaining government and multilateral donor relations; (c) by undertaking public information activities to increase the visibility of and support for women's empowerment; and (d) by producing and disseminating advocacy materials to promote policy analysis and decision-making for women's empowerment, for example through the series of publications entitled "Reflecting on experience in Latin America and Caribbean".

22. One key area of communication that UNIFEM has strengthened is its use of information and communication technology for development cooperation, through the establishment and use of Women Watch, a joint Internet initiative that provides a gateway to United Nations information and data on the advancement of women worldwide. In June 1996, UNIFEM, the Division for the Advancement of Women and the International Research and

Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) co-sponsored an expert workshop on global information through computer networking technology in the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women. As a result of that meeting, UNIFEM worked with the Division for the Advancement of Women and INSTRAW to develop Women Watch. The Fund's own homepage, which contains information about UNIFEM and its work, is linked to Women Watch.

III. Building partnerships within the United Nations system

23. During the reporting period, UNIFEM increased its coordination and collaboration with other United Nations and international agencies. In particular, UNIFEM has worked with UNDP and the resident coordinator system in providing technical support and consultation on the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and on gender mainstreaming, convening inter-agency thematic groups on gender at the country level, some of which include bilateral aid organizations and non-governmental organizations, in order to coordinate technical and financial support to implement the Platform for Action. UNIFEM sees that support as a means of linking women's empowerment and mainstreaming at the country level to the United Nations system and as a way of bringing various groups, including women's organizations, non-governmental organizations, Governments and multilateral agencies, together to work towards the advancement of women.

24. In 1996, UNIFEM also participated in the Administrative Committee on Coordination inter-agency task forces on integrated follow-up to global United Nations conferences, serving as a link between the Administrative Committee on Coordination Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality and the three other task forces, to ensure that gender issues were included in the agendas of all the working groups. UNIFEM also collaborated with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) on the women's empowerment component of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development,^b held at Cairo in 1994, developed joint activities with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) at the global, regional and national levels and worked with the Inter-American Development Bank and other agencies in planning and launching the women's leadership and representation programme.

IV. Financial management

A. Income

25. During the financial period from 1 January to 31 December 1996, UNIFEM continued the process of strengthening its overall financial controls, including the consistent monitoring of programme activities. Expenditures for programmes and projects were \$14,395,000, while contributions to the Fund totalled \$17,156,000.

26. During 1996, actual contributions received to the core resources of UNIFEM from donor Governments totalled \$13,090,000, a decrease from the 1995 total of \$15,011,000. The 1995 total included one-time special contributions by three donors, amounting to \$3,479,000. In 1996, core resources increased by \$664,000 over the initial estimate of \$12,450,000 provided in the financial report of 1995. That resulted from increases in the annual contributions of 11 Governments, along with first-time contributions from five donor Governments.

27. The 1997 pledging conference held in November 1996 resulted in \$6,384,000 in written and verbal pledges from 28 donor Governments. That amount represented an increase of \$674,000 over the 1996 total of \$5,710,000. Those pledges, when combined with the Fund's informal contacts with donors who did not pledge indicate that, in 1997, UNIFEM can expect to receive an estimated minimum of \$13,060,000 from 56 donor Governments.

B. Re-establishment of the Fund's operational reserve and partial funding modality

28. During 1996, UNIFEM worked closely with the UNDP Division of Finance to re-establish its operational reserve and to develop a revised modality for the partial funding system in UNIFEM. The partial funding system will allow the Fund to rebuild its programme and provide for larger programmes of longer duration that can have a more sustained impact within the Fund's subprogramme areas. At the first regular session 1997, the Executive Board of UNDP/UNFPA approved the partial funding modality.

V. Response to the external evaluation and the strategy and business plan of the Fund

A. Response to the external evaluation

29. In 1996, UNIFEM underwent an external evaluation at the request of the Executive Board of UNDP/UNFPA. The evaluation reviewed the work of UNIFEM over the period from 1990 to 1995, including UNIFEM programmes and the functioning of the organization itself. The evaluation report identified several overall strengths of the organization and made recommendations for improvement. It highlighted, for example, that the Fund's programme strategy and performance had been consistent with its mandate of empowering women, and that its networking, advisory and brokering role between women's organizations, Governments and other United Nations agencies was contributing to the advancement of women. The report noted that UNIFEM required a better information management system, improved physical facilities and a reorientation towards management for results.

30. After the submission of the external evaluation report, regional and headquarters staff discussed the recommendations of the evaluation at the annual Strategic Planning Workshop and, in particular, focused on changes that might be made to the Fund's future work in view of those recommendations. UNIFEM also prepared an initial response to the evaluation, entitled "Initial follow-up to the external evaluation of the United Nations Development Fund for Women: response to key recommendations" and a more detailed response to the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board dated 10 January 1997, entitled "A response to the recommendations of UNIFEM's external evaluation".

31. The detailed response to the external evaluation outlined the ways in which UNIFEM would align its programming and operations based on the strengths and weaknesses identified in the evaluation report. It stated that, in particular, UNIFEM was working to ensure that it: (a) was more focused in programming and that there was better tracking of the impact of its work; (b) strengthened itself as a learning and advocacy organization; (c) improved its ability to be an effective catalyst within the United Nations system; (d) developed into a centre of excellence on gender and development; (e) ensured that everyday management and administration was effective and efficient; and (f) strengthened its partnerships with key stakeholders.

B. Strategy and business plan

32. In response to the findings of the external evaluation and at the request of the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board at its third regular session of 1996, UNIFEM developed a strategy and business plan for 1997-2000. The business plan is the critical tool in the work of UNIFEM for the next three years. It reflects the intention of the Fund, squarely set within its mandate, to focus its work for maximum effectiveness. The plan reflects lessons and observations from the organizational evaluation undertaken in 1996. It embodies the commitment of UNIFEM to support mainstreaming efforts at all the levels of its work: with Governments, the resident coordinator system and the United Nations system. Finally, the plan is directly linked to the recommendations and commitments embodied in the Beijing Platform for Action.

33. The business plan outlines: the mandate and goal of UNIFEM; the nature of UNIFEM business, including defining its work, how it does its work and with whom it works; criteria for programme selection; new opportunities and challenges in the changing external environment; internal factors; and six strategic objectives. Those objectives are aimed at: (a) increasing options for women, especially those living in poverty, through focused programming in the three sub-themes; (b) strengthening the effectiveness of UNIFEM by building on strategic linkages to field level experience and incorporating the principles of a learning organization; (c) strengthening the United Nations system's capacity to support women's empowerment and gender mainstreaming in its policies and programmes; (d) ensuring that the Fund's personnel, financial and programme management systems effectively and efficiently support the goals and programmes of the organizations; (e) strengthening partnerships with key stakeholders so as to increase understanding of the work of UNIFEM and its value for women's empowerment; and (f) building a larger and more diversified resource base. The strategy and business plan includes a workplan for 1997-2000, which outlines the activities and expected results that will enable UNIFEM to achieve its six strategic objectives.

VI. Follow-up to global conferences

34. In 1996, UNIFEM participated in the World Food Summit held in Rome and the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) held at Istanbul and was involved in working closely with other United Nations agencies, Governments, and women's organizations on the

follow-up to and implementation of the outcome of previous United Nations conferences, in particular the Fourth World Conference on Women. UNIFEM used three strategies in that regard: (a) undertaking advocacy and providing technical support to United Nations agencies and Governments to strengthen their understanding of and commitment to implementation of the Beijing commitments; (b) supporting women's and other civil society organizations to work and strategize together to articulate their priorities and vision for implementation priorities; and (c) public education campaigns to build a constituency for post-conference implementation. The Fund's "brokering" role is often more important than the financial support it contributes to that process; nonetheless, the Fund's regional programme advisers have attracted funds from a variety of sources to support a large number of activities relating to the implementation of the Platform for Action.

35. In the work on building an integrated and coordinated approach to the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women, UNIFEM has participated in a number of global initiatives. As mentioned in paragraph 24 above, UNIFEM is a member of the Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality, chaired by the Secretary-General's Adviser on Women, and serves as the Committee's liaison with the other inter-agency task forces to ensure that a gender dimension is incorporated into their work on the implementation of conference goals. UNIFEM has also convened United Nations inter-agency thematic groups on gender at the country level in order to coordinate follow-up to United Nations conferences.

36. The previously mentioned website for "Women Watch" serves both as an information source on activities related to the Fourth World Conference on Women and implementation of the Platform for Action and as a catalyst that encourages non-governmental organizations, women's organizations and Governments to work on follow-up to the Beijing Conference.

37. In 1996, UNIFEM assisted women in developing countries to put into practice their visions for themselves, their families, their communities and the world, as embodied in the Platform for Action. Technical and financial assistance was provided to Governments and women's groups in 55 countries. In southern Africa, India, Brazil, Thailand and Senegal, UNIFEM convened inter-agency groupings to support the resident coordinator system, built a collaborative approach to implementation of the Platform for Action, and brokered working relationships between Governments, non-governmental organizations and the United Nations system.

38. As UNIFEM continues to implement the goals outlined in its strategy and business plan, it will be working to incorporate the principles of a learning organization, to improve its communication, information and tracking systems and to make strategic investments in order to obtain external resources through collaborative action. UNIFEM will continue to work in partnership within the United Nations system and to build on the Secretary-General's efforts towards a more coordinated approach to the delivery of the United Nations development assistance.

VII. Role of the United Nations Development Fund for Women in eliminating violence against women

39. In its resolution 50/166, the General Assembly welcomed the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action agreed upon at the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women, which included recommendations for the prevention and elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls. The Assembly recalled its resolutions 48/104 and 48/107 of 20 December 1993, in which it proclaimed the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women and reaffirmed the catalytic role played by UNIFEM in facilitating the efforts of Governments and non-governmental organizations supporting innovative activities that directly benefit and empower women. It also urged Governments to allocate adequate resources for activities related to the elimination of violence against women, including resources for the implementation of plans of action at all appropriate levels in conformity with paragraph 124 (p) of the Beijing Platform for Action.

40. In the same resolution, the General Assembly reiterated its appreciation for the advocacy initiatives of UNIFEM, including, *inter alia*, its contribution to and participation in the follow-up to the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action,⁶ adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights, in particular with respect to efforts to combat violence against women; commended the Fund for its role in strengthening national capacity to improve the situation of women; and recommended that in the light of the Beijing Platform for Action, the Fund should review and strengthen its programme of work. Further, it requested the Administrator of UNDP to hold consultations with relevant organs and bodies of the United Nations, in order to consider the possibility of establishing a trust fund, within the existing mandate, structure and management of UNIFEM, in support of national, regional and international actions, including those taken by Governments and

non-governmental organizations, to eliminate violence against women.

41. Following the guidance provided by the General Assembly in its resolution 50/166, the Administrator decided to establish a Trust Fund in Support of Action to Eliminate Violence against Women, to be administered and managed by UNIFEM. Communications were sent to all Member States and observers informing them of the new initiative.

42. Additional steps taken to bring the Trust Fund into operation have included consultations with other organs, bodies, funds and programmes in the United Nations system as well as non-governmental organization partners on development of the terms of reference for the Trust Fund. Financial and organizational mechanisms for administering the Trust Fund have also been put in place.

43. A detailed outline of the criteria developed for the Trust Fund was provided in a report transmitted by the Administrator to the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-first session in March 1997.^d

44. Information about the existence of the Trust Fund was posted on the Internet through Women Watch and disseminated through the UNIFEM network of regional programme advisers, who sent out information on the Trust Fund to non-governmental organization partners working on women's human rights and on the elimination of gender-based violence in developing countries. Additionally, UNIFEM staff met with delegates and non-governmental organization advocates attending the sessions of the Commission on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the Commission on the Status of Women and the Commission on Human Rights to inform them of the establishment of the Trust Fund. Presentations about the funding mechanism were made at various international forums, particularly at those that focused on implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action.

45. In consultation with its network of regional programme advisers, and after examining practices of other organizations and foundations in the development cooperation field, UNIFEM developed guidelines for funding, using General Assembly resolution 50/166 and the Trust Fund's terms of reference as guiding principles.

46. By June 1997, the Trust Fund had received over \$1.2 million in contributions from Governments (see para. 57).

47. Management of the Trust Fund has entailed the development of a process for appraising proposals submitted for funding. UNIFEM also endeavoured, where proposals were submitted in a timely manner, to work with possible

grant recipients, to ensure that all critical information was provided in advance of the Committee meeting.

48. In order to ensure collaboration with other partners, UNIFEM organized a Project Approval Committee meeting for the selection of activities for funding.

49. The materials for the Committee meeting included background material on the mandate, terms of reference, selection criteria and operational guidelines of the Trust Fund, as well as fact sheets for each of the proposals to be considered at the session.

50. The Committee met from 20 to 23 June 1997. All UNIFEM programme staff at headquarters were invited to the meetings, as were two representatives from non-governmental organization networks who work in the area of violence against women. In order to ensure collaboration and input of other units, funds and programmes of the United Nations system, UNIFEM invited to the meetings representatives of the Division for the Advancement of Women, the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, the Centre for Human Rights, the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Division, UNICEF, UNFPA and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

51. The Committee considered 36 projects and recommended 23 projects for approval. Disbursements totalled \$868,375.

52. Projects were funded in the following countries: Bolivia, Brazil, Cambodia, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Ecuador, Ethiopia, India, Jordan, Kenya, Mexico, Pakistan, Peru, the Philippines, Senegal, South Africa, Trinidad and Tobago and Venezuela. Also receiving grants were two regional projects with non-governmental organization networks and one global study.

53. The initiatives funded represent a wide range of strategies undertaken by national and regional groups to eliminate gender-based violence: educational campaigns, capacity-building of women's organizations, changing relevant laws, making women aware of their rights, public education on laws and rights of women pertaining to violence in rural and urban communities, action-oriented research, strengthening women's advocacy skills in work on gender-based violence, violence against women migrant workers and various training programmes targeting police, judges, teachers, health workers, and public administrators.

54. Most of the projects approved in the first grant cycle are scheduled to begin their activities in September 1997. Each grantee has been informed that an impact assessment of their initiative will be required at the end of their project.

in order to ensure the documentation of the projects supported by the Trust Fund and to facilitate a global impact assessment of this initiative at a later stage. This will not only help in shaping the focus and criteria of the Trust Fund itself, but provide critical information for the General Assembly and other agencies in the United Nations system on the best practices and lessons learned from the innovative and catalytic initiatives carried out under the auspices of the Trust Fund.

55. The next review of proposals under the Trust Fund is scheduled for November 1997. Additional and ongoing outreach and dissemination of the existence of the Trust Fund and its criteria is currently being pursued, in order to encourage an even broader range of proposals. Given the expansion of the UNIFEM mandate to work in Eastern and Central Europe and in the countries members of the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Fund is devising an outreach strategy to women's advocacy groups and Governments in that region to elicit proposals for the next funding cycle.

56. UNIFEM is preparing activities for the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, a five-year review of the World Conference on Human Rights and a review by the Commission on the Status of Women of the Beijing Platform for Action chapters on violence, human rights, armed conflict and the girl-child. The Trust Fund is an important contribution to the work of the United Nations in the promotion and protection of the human rights of women. To that end, UNIFEM will ensure that the lessons learned from its operational activities will continue to reflect and inform the discussions at the policy level.

57. Grants in the June 1997 funding cycle for the Trust Fund total \$868,375 (see para. 51 above). Contributions to the Trust Fund as of June 1997 are as follows: Australia, \$75,188; Denmark, \$84,126; Italy, \$118,343; Japan, \$1,000,000; Malta, \$1,000; Mauritius, \$54.06 and Republic of Korea, \$10,000.

58. UNIFEM is working to attract additional contributions from Member States to replenish the resources of the Trust Fund, in order to enable a meaningful funding cycle in November 1997.

Notes

^a A/CONF.177, chap. I, resolution I, annex II.

^b See *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5-13 September 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18).

^c A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III.

^d E/CN.6/1997/8, annex.